


The Gospel of Mark  
Part 38  
Jesus' Triumphal Entry

# TALKING POINTS WALKING POINTS

## Leaders' Guide

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

- 1 Triangle Community Church aims to be a "transforming church". We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." Since "Talking Points, Walking Points" is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to "dive deep", too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled "Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time", are perfect for private reflection.

## Suggested Starter Question

- 2 What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you?  
...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?

## Questions for Reflection or Discussion

### Observation—*What do I see?*

- 3 Read Mark 11:1-2 & 7-10. Is there any indication that the crowd's response was insincere?
- 4 Read Mark 15:6-15. This incident occurred **just one week later**—how do you explain the flip-flop?
- 5 Do they appear sincere in both events? Are they hypocrites or just irresolute? What do you think?

### Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- 6 Review the definition of hypocrisy at the end of the third paragraph of the **Sermon Summary**.
- 7 Now, look up "irresolute" at [WebstersDictionary1828.com](http://WebstersDictionary1828.com). What do you learn?
- 8 We **know** how Jesus feels about hypocrisy, [Not sure? See this week's "Digging Deeper" feature.] so now let's see how he feels about irresoluteness. Read Luke 9:57–62. What do you conclude?

### Application—*What do I do with this?*

- 9 Truth be told, we **all** probably struggle with both hypocrisy and irresoluteness in **some** areas. **In what areas** do you tend to want to present yourself otherwise than you actually are (hypocrisy)? **In what areas** do you tend to change your views when you're under pressure (irresoluteness)?

- 1 The content found in this yellow box explains what TCC is **attempting to do** in people's lives. Take a moment to read and discuss it with your group. Do they have "buy-in" on this transformation?
- 2 Then take a moment to get discussion rolling with this standard "starter question".
- 3 It doesn't seem so. Nobody prompted them to honor Jesus in that way. True—it was Passover season, and emotions were high (and probably fickle), but this is spontaneous.
- 4 Emotions are fickle, and thus actions based on emotion will change along with one's emotions.
- 5 They appear sincere—just unstable (see James 1:8). Jesus accuses the religious leaders of hypocrisy, but not the crowd. They just seem to be irresolute. That's **not** good, but it's not hypocrisy.
- 6 A hypocrite is **not** someone who fails to attain a desired standard of behavior. That just qualifies them as a sinner! A hypocrite is someone who **claims** to have attained a standard that they **have not**.
- 7 "Irresolute" means not firm or constant in purpose; not decided; not determined; wavering; given to doubt. irresolute men either resolve not at all, or resolve and re-resolve.
- 8 The "irresolute" cannot be Jesus' follower. He requires steadfastness.
- 9 Lead your group in honesty on this one. Close by praying for both sincerity and steadfastness.

## Sermon Summary Mark 11:1-21

In today's message we pick up the action as Jesus and his disciples travel south from Jericho to Jerusalem where Jesus knows that He will be killed. Because it was the time of Passover, the road would have been crowded with thousands of pilgrims making their way to Jerusalem the city would double, triple, or even quadruple. Numbers of up to 3 million people have been suggested!. The road from Jericho to Jerusalem was infested with bandits, so the Romans established guard posts along the way and people traveled in caravans for safety. But bandits weren't the only challenge—it was uphill the entire way (an elevation change of 3,370 feet in just 15 miles!). The travel to Jerusalem marked the climax of Jesus' journey as a humble, suffering servant, a journey that began in Luke 9:51 when he "determined to go to Jerusalem." Jesus did not come as "just another pilgrim"—he is coming to present himself as Israel's King! In doing so, he was consciously fulfilling prophesy (Zechariah 9:9). Jesus wanted the Jewish people to recognize Him as their long-promised King. The Jewish Messiah is the Creator of the Universe, the Ancient of Days, the Mighty One, the Righteous Judge, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! And how does this Exalted One enter Jerusalem? He comes riding on the back of a little donkey colt! Friends, that is humility! (The choice of a young animal which never had been ridden also aligned with prophesy—see Numbers 19:2; Deuteronomy 21:3; and 1 Samuel 6:7).

As He began His procession into the city, people were throwing their outer garments and leafy branches onto the road—the red carpet treatment. It was a sign of their submission to him, a way to honor the newly installed king (see 2 Kings 9:13). That word "hosanna" means, "Lord save us!" In a way far deeper than they understood, that is **exactly** what Jesus had come to do! Hundreds of years before (in 586 BC, when Jerusalem was destroyed and its people were forced to go into exile to Babylon), God gave a vision to the prophet Ezekiel of the glory of God rising up and departing from the temple. God's glory ascended three hundred feet to rest on the Mount of Olives (Ezekiel 11:23). Now, the glory of God—manifested in Jesus—descends again into the Temple (Mark 11:1-10 cf. John 1:14; Hebrews 1:3)! The tragedy is that the Jewish people did not understand that the King of glory was in their midst, and was about to fulfill the destiny for which He was born. So while the people shouted "Lord save!" that day, they failed to grasp that Jesus was the returning Shekinah glory of God!

Next, Mark records an important but confusing incident: Jesus cursed a fruitless fig tree (v. 12-14). What's that all about? Based on the timing of Passover that year, this would have occurred in late March. This tree, by bearing leaves, gave the impression that it was fig-bearing—but it wasn't. It presented itself one way, but reality was different. One of the most graphic forms of prophetic judgment in the Old Testament was the object lesson, and here the barren fig tree represents barren Israel. Like the fig tree, the Pharisees looked good on the outside, but inside they were fruitless (Matthew 23:27). Spiritually hungry people would come to them for sustenance, and they had nothing nutritious to offer! This sort of hypocrisy is one of the most cited reasons people reject Christianity (Romans 2:24). Admittedly, the church is full of sinners—in fact, it requires a person to be a sinner in order to join it—but while all hypocrites are sinners, not all sinners are hypocrites. A hypocrite is **not** someone who fails to attain a desired standard of behavior. That just qualifies them as a sinner! A hypocrite is someone who **claims** to have attained a standard that they **have not**.

The specific source of the hypocrisy Jesus was addressing is found in v. 15-21. The Jews were to be a blessing to all the nations, but the Jewish leaders were excluding Gentiles from the only court of the Temple open to them (v. 17). Tragically, Israel and her leaders had rejected God's purpose for them. Rather than see the Gentiles as "the objects of God's love and concern," the Jews hated them. Rather than the Temple being a place of prayer for all the nations, its purpose had been co-opted, corrupted, and distorted. The Jews hoped that the Messiah would return and cleanse the temple **of** Gentiles. Instead, Jesus cleansed the temple **for** the Gentiles! Like the barren fig tree Jesus cursed, the temple's leadership had proven themselves to be barren, unfaithful shepherds. Israel's worship had become an exercise in hypocrisy, and her outreach to the nations was non-existent. The Jewish leaders were so angry that they plotted to end His life (v. 18). In just a few days, they would accomplish that goal.

From today's passage, we learn that God is determined to be worshiped by people from every tribe, tongue and nation. The church is the manifestation in the world of Jew and Gentile coming together in Christ to worship the One True God. God hates empty, hypocritical worship, and He will judge it. God's grace is available to anyone who will acknowledge their sin and look to Jesus as their Savior. God has given to his church this message of reconciliation. We must not keep this good news to ourselves. So, are we seeking to share this message as broadly as we can? Or, like the Jewish nation, are we keeping this good news to ourselves? Are we building redemptive relationships with our non-Christian friends, neighbors and co-workers? We should view interactions with non-believers, like the court of the Gentiles, as an opportunity to point people to God their Creator. Finally, we must realize that while God will not take his hand of blessing off His Universal Church as he did with national Israel, individual churches may face his judgment. God has done it before; it could happen to TCC. Let's not go there.

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

*Religious hypocrisy is particularly wicked.*

*Let's use the "Five Question Bible Study" method to learn to avoid this heinous sin...*

**Monday**— Matthew 6:1-18

**Tuesday**— Matthew 7:1-5

**Wednesday**— Matthew 23:23-28

**Thursday**— Romans 12:9-13

**Friday**— James 3:13-18

**Saturday**— 1 Peter 1:22-2:3

*Need help growing out of hypocrisy?*

For free, confidential help, write to:  
**BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com**

### Five Question Bible Study

Bible Text: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would *this text* answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]